

comfortable with the stress thus calling the
bird a female other than that it was
silent.

On 25 June I visited the Denver Museum and
had the opportunity to view bird skins. This
confirmed to me that this is a correct identifica-
tion and that I ~~could~~^{don't} see the difference
in color between birds that would
allow me to call this bird a male or a
female.

Sincerely,

Sam Humphrey.

Above double line written 20 June.
Below double line written 1 July.

51-90-45

962
TO
CFD
A

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO

AT CROW VALLEY CAMPGROUND, WELD COUNTY, COLORADO

20 JUNE 1990

DESCRIPTION BY STEPHEN F. BAILEY

Somewhat before 09:00 on 20 June 1990, Joan M. Humphrey discovered and identified a silent Yellow-throated Vireo in the trees of the Crow Valley Campground, Weld County, Colorado. The other observers at that time were Ben King and Jerry Weinberger.

Many others of us from Bus "D" of the ABA Convention field trip searched for this vireo in the same trees for about 30 minutes, without success. Eventually I played a hunch, which resulted in my refinding the Yellow-throated Vireo about 09:15. Not only were all 40 birders on Bus "D" able to see this bird, but another bus ("C"?) arrived in time to enjoy it before it disappeared for good. Thus about 80 birders saw this bird.

My hunch was that the vireo had moved to the trees above the orphaned Red Fox pup that was playing so entertainingly nearby. I was convinced that the vireo had moved to other trees (or departed the whole area). The most likely trees in which the vireo could be but not be noticed were those above the fox, because every birder under those trees was completely captivated by the fox; everybody looked down -- nobody looked up! Having already watched the fox for quite some time, I was then able to ignore it while searching these trees for the vireo. Within 2 minutes I refound the vireo above the fox, and I called everyone together to see it.

The vireo was moving silently through the crowns of the deciduous trees, foraging in a standard foliage-gleaning manner. On one occasion we saw it capture and eat a large moth. The bird easily held the moth with its relatively deep, hooked bill, then beat the moth a few times on a branch before gulping down the moth's body and head while the moth's wings fluttered down toward us.

The vireo looked medium-large for its genus, being a bit larger and much plumper than most wood warblers. The yellow throat, breast, and spectacles were obvious, as were the two bold white wing bars on each gray wing. A more detailed description follows.

The bill and eyes were all dark. The bill was quite deep even for a vireo's, and the entire culmen was curved, ending in the hooked tip. I saw no actual overhang of the hooked tip, however.

Most of the thick round head was yellowish-green. Within this base color the yellow spectacles were broad and diffusely-bounded. The chin, throat, and breast were clean bright yellow, but not as bright as on many birds of this species. The belly, vent, and undertail coverts were unmarked white. The yellow and white blended along the breast/belly boundary, rather than forming a sharp line of contrast.

Behind the yellowish-green head and nape, the back was a

grayish-olive. The rump appeared grayer still, though this was only seen briefly as the bird foraged diagonally overhead. The wings were dark gray. Each had two bold white wing bars, formed by the white tips of the greater and median secondary coverts. The tertials were edged with white or whitish. The tail looked plain gray, without any real color pattern. Sometimes light shining through the outermost rectrix gave the false impression of a pale tail edge.

I believe that the legs and feet were dark (gray?), but as usual when viewing an arboreal passerine I forgot to note this specifically.

Due to the silence of this bird and its relatively dull colors (to my eye), I stated to the assembled birders that this individual was probably a female. In any case, the characters noted above confirm the species identification.

I have seen many Yellow-throated Vireos in eastern North America, plus one in California. I am a member of the California Bird Records Committee, Regional Editor for the Middle Pacific Coast Region of American Birds, and a 30-year active birder in North America.